

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

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CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR GR TU

SUBJECT: RECENT GREEK-TURKISH TALKS ON CONTINENTAL SHELF

TERMED UNPRODUCTIVE BY GREEK PRESS

REF: ATHENS 0224(NOTAL)

1. GREEK PRESS FEBRUARY 4 REPORTED THAT RECENT GREEK-TURKISH TALKS ON CONTINENTAL SHELF HELD IN BERN JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 2(REFTEL) HAD ENDED WITHOUT ANY PRODUCTIVE RESULTS. REPORTS EXPLAIN, HOWEVER, THAT THE BERN MEETING AT LEAST PRESENTED THE OPPORTUNITY TO BOTH SIDES TO STATE THEIR VIEWS AND MAKE CONCRETE PROPOSALS WHICH CAN NOW BE STUDIED IN DETAIL. SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY BULLETIN FEBRUARY 4 CARRIED FOLLOWING
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NON-ATTRIBUTED STATEMENT IN CONNECTION WITH THE

CONCLUSION OF THE TALKS:

2. BEGIN TEXT. AFTER AN EXHAUSTIVE DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT, IT WAS ONCE AGAIN NOTED THAT A BASIC DIFFERENCE OF OPINION EXISTED BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES WITH REGARD TO THE DEMARCATION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. THIS DIFFERENCE OF OPINION CONFIRMED THE GREEK VIEW THAT THE MATTER CAN BE SOLVED ONLY AT THE INTERNATIONAL COURT AT THE HAGUE. END TEXT. SOME NEWSPAPERS FEBRUARY 4 CITE THESE REMARKS AS CONSTITUTING AN OFFICIAL GOG ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE SUBJECT, WHILE OTHERS CATEGORIZE IT AS AN UNOFFICIAL STATEMENT.

3. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL COMMENT THUS FAR ABOUT ANOTHER ROUND OF TALKS, SOME PRESS ACCOUNTS SUGGEST THAT A NEW ROUND ON THE SHELF ISSUE IS EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ALL PAPERS APPEAR TO AGREE THAT THE TURKISH SIDE REMAINS INSISTENT THAT THE SHELF ISSUE BE SOLVED THROUGH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT ONLY IF THEY FAIL SHOULD THE MATTER BE FORWARDED TO THE ICJ. VRADYNI (CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVERNMENT) FEBRUARY 3 SUGGESTED THAT THE PRIME REASON BEHIND THE "SHIPWRECK OF THE TALKS" WAS THE INSISTENT ASSERTION OF THE TURKS THAT "IN NO WAY CAN THE FACT THAT THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF GREEK ISLANDS IN THE AEGEAN CLOSE TO THE TURKISH COAST DEPRIVE TURKEY OF ITS NATURAL AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS TO A PORTION OF THE SEABED OF THE AEGEAN". IN ADDITION, A NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS CARRY PORTIONS OF AN ARTICLE REPORTEDLY CARRIED BY MILLIYET WHICH ASSERTED THAT SHOULD GREECE EXTEND ITS TERRITORIAL WATERS FROM SIX TO TWELVE MILES, TURKEY WOULD FIND HERSELF IN A DIFFICULT POSITION, RAISING THE POSSIBILITY OF CLASHES WITH GREECE SINCE ALL THE "WEALTH PRODUCING RESOURCES OF THE SEA" WOULD BELONG TO GREECE AND THE AEGEAN WOULD BE CLOSED (TO TURKEY) FROM EVERY SIDE.

4. REPRESENTATIVE HEADLINES GIVE THE FLAVOR OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE BERN TALKS AND THE MILLIYET ARTICLE. ACROPOLIS (CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVERNMENT), LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"THE TURKS THREATEN WAR IF GREEK TERRITORIAL WATERS EXTENDED TO 12 MILES". KATHIMERINI(PRO-GOVERNMENT), "BASIC DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS ASCERTAINED IN BERN TALKS ON AEGEAN AS REGARDS RULES OF LAW ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF." TA NEA (LIBERAL, OPPOSITION), "TURKEY SPEAKS ONCE MORE OF A CONFRONTATION OVER THE AEGEAN." APOYEVMATINI (CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVERNMENT), "THE TURKS THREATEN US OVER THE AEGEAN. ELEFTHEROTYPIA (LEFT-OF-CENTER, ANTI-

U.S.) "THE TURKS TORPEDO THE BILATERAL TALKS; HEADING
TOWARDS A NEW CRISIS IN THE AEGEAN."

5. WE WILL BE FOLLOWING UP WITH MFA AND REPORTING THEIR
VIEWS BY SEPTTEL. KUBISCH

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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